

CONSIDERATIONS  
ON THE  
CAUSES AND EFFECTS  
OF THE  
PRESENT WAR,  
AND ON THE  
NECESSITY OF CONTINUING IT,  
TILL A REGULAR GOVERNMENT IS ESTABLISHED IN  
FRANCE.

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*Armis libertatem, patriam, parentesque, et alia omnia tegi.*—SALL.

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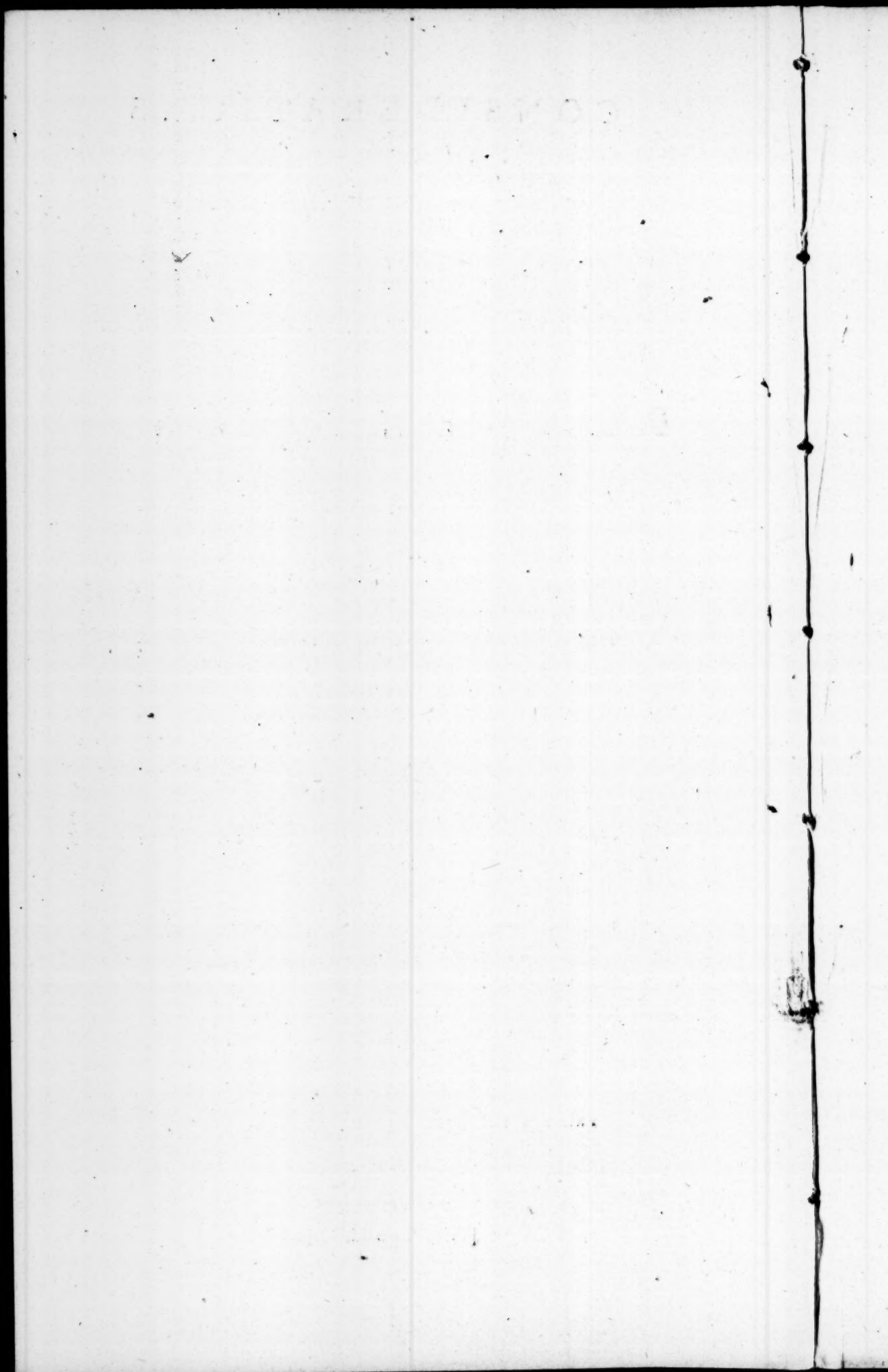
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## CONSIDERATIONS, &c.

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NEVER, in the annals of history, has a period occurred so momentous as the present. Whichever way we turn our eyes, a scene presents itself, which must be viewed with dissatisfaction and disgust; and, what is still more afflicting, after weighing circumstances with coolness and deliberation, we are obliged to confess, that war is preferable to peace.

The present conflict differs from all others in which we have hitherto been engaged. It is not a war of ambition, but of prudence: it is not a war of rivalry or choice, but of necessity and self-defence. In order to explain myself more fully, I shall enter into a detail of those causes which rendered it inevitable; and shall afterwards demonstrate, that whilst the politics of Europe remain in their present critical and fluctuating state, it is both our duty and our interest to continue it.

Europe, after having enjoyed a long and prosperous peace, was, at length, disturbed by the rest-

less ambition of the French. Not satisfied with a gradual and rational change of government, which might have protected them from the tyranny under which they formerly groaned; which might have increased their individual happiness, and have augmented their political strength; they soon broke down the barriers of moderation and prudence. That which was easily obtained, they rejected with contempt; and, invading the regions of speculation, proceeded in folly and wickedness, till they had waded through all the weaknesses and crimes which can debase the character of man; till they had subverted all the established principles of civil society; till they had levelled all nominal distinctions of ranks; till they had eradicated all notions of religion and morality; in short, till they had broken all those links, and dissolved all those ties which are capable of uniting men together, or of rendering them happy. When they had accomplished this arduous and melancholy undertaking, they professed, that their object was to erect a constitution on the basis of equality. This absurd scheme they attempted to reduce to practice; and, after splitting on a thousand rocks, have, at last, established a system of the basest and most atrocious despotism which ever disgraced the proceedings of men.

When the scene first opened, we stood in anxious doubt, expecting an event which was to consolidate the happiness of a great and powerful nation. As it expanded, we foresaw the evils which

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it was likely to produce. If, however, they had only occupied themselves about their own internal regulations, we should still have been at peace. We should have viewed with commiseration the sufferings of the people; we should have lamented that folly which allowed them to be deceived by the gross arts of a set of daring demagogues; we might, perhaps, have endeavoured to act as mediators between them and an amiable Sovereign, who had nothing so much at heart as their welfare, and who was willing to make every sacrifice which could promote and secure it; but we should have interfered no farther: we might have interposed with good offices; but we should never have threatened hostilities.

Unfortunately, however, the moment the prevailing faction had overpowered the opposition which was made to their invasions, they turned their views to more remote objects. Not contented with having at their entire disposal every thing which regarded internal organization; not sufficiently employed with framing a government, on which the future glory of France was to depend; they discarded from their deliberations all the maxims of legislators, and, after having reduced their own country to a state of absolute desolation, came to the resolution of distributing what they chose to term liberty to the whole world; which grand design was to be accomplished, by the total annihilation of every thing which is worthy of the attachment and veneration of men. Religion was

to be ridiculed; the altars of the Almighty were to be profaned; subordination was to vanish; all the moral and social duties of life were to sink into oblivion; and nothing but equality was to reign.

It was their professed intention to subjugate all Europe. They successively seized Avignon; attacked the Empire; invaded Savoy; oppressed Geneva; and, to crown the work, on the 19th of November, 1792, they passed a decree, which expressly declares their resolution, to favour and assist the turbulent and disaffected in every country, till they have enabled them to destroy their government, and to establish another on their destructive principles. Long, indeed, before their rupture with Germany, their views had been clearly manifested. Their first step was to break the Treaty of Westphalia; they even began to arm previous to the conference at Pillnitz; they next menaced with destruction the Electorate of Treves; and, when they thought their strength sufficiently increased, they declared war.

At the interview which the Emperor and the King of Prussia had at Pillnitz, they only entered into an engagement to protect the Royal Family of France from personal danger, and the total inaction, in which their armies continued, is a plain proof that they were pacifically disposed. Had, therefore, the French been inclined to remain on friendly terms, the storm might have been averted; but they found the necessity of engaging the public mind which was beginning to sicken with dis-  
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appointment, and to return from the mazes of theory and the airy excursions of imagination.

When they openly avowed the principles which actuated them, we might easily perceive, that it was not their design to leave us long unmolested. The rivalry, which has existed for so many centuries, between the two nations, we might be certain would excite their jealousy, and make them desirous that we should fall among the first victims to their inordinate ambition.

When the object of their designs was so palpable, we should certainly have acted a part highly injudicious and criminal, if we had not taken the alarm, and prepared ourselves to meet an attack, which was so evidently meditated. When Brissot and Condorcet published and circulated papers in France, purposely to increase the antipathy of the French, and to inflame their irreconcilable hatred, were not such measures a sufficient indication of their disposition towards us; and did we do more than prudence required, by interdicting the exportation of corn and warlike stores? They attempted, indeed, to blind us by insidious professions; but, whilst they were making them, did they not treat us as enemies? Were they not guilty of the most detestable perfidy? Did they not disperse emissaries over every part of the kingdom, to disseminate their pernicious maxims; to poison the minds of the people; to disaffect them towards the laws; and to promote a revolution, which would have been followed by the same scenes of  
horror

horror and carnage which have for ever disgraced the inhabitants of France, and imbued the very soil with stains, from which it can never be purified. And who were the traitors and incendiaries who made such exertions to ruin us? Wretches, who pretended to have been persecuted in their own country, and to have fled from penury and death. Rejected everywhere else, they applied for protection to the mildness and benevolence of the British Government. Our compassion induced us to listen to their tale of woe:—we received them with open arms:—hungry and naked, we fed and clothed them:—we adopted them as our children; we sheltered them with our laws; we nourished them with our charity: and for this, they laboured to destroy us, by industriously propagating their diabolical principles, and thus repaid our generosity with the blackest ingratitude.

Whilst such abominable measures, on the part of the French, were notorious to the whole world, could we be expected to remain inactive, and passively to submit to those insults and incroachments which were destined to accomplish our misery and ruin? We, therefore, as became us, made preparations for a war, which it was evident, to all thinking men, could not be averted much longer; unless we were base enough tamely to allow ourselves to be dictated to by Frenchmen, or foolish enough to be guided by their wild and destructive principles.

**Baffled**



Baffled in the pursuit of their favourite plan, which was first to weaken us, by sowing among us the seeds of sedition and error, they were highly exasperated, and, whilst they extolled their own spirit and wisdom, launched out a proportionate torrent of abuse against our stupidity and supineness. But, happily for this country, its inhabitants are not of the same fickle disposition as the French. We regarded their language as a proof of their impotence, and were not displeased because they reviled us; well knowing, that the invective, which is uttered by them, is honourable to those against whom it is levelled. Notwithstanding the distinction which they artfully strove to create between the government and the people, affecting to revere the one, and offering the fraternal embrace; but branding the other with every epithet of antipathy and opprobrium, they could not delude us. We were not to be enticed into folly by the false charms of their new-fangled doctrines. We were not to be persuaded, by any deceptions to which ingenuity could resort, that our government was bad. Convinced, from the experience of a long series of years, that it was adequate to all those great ends for which it was instituted, we were not willing, merely from a love of innovation, to enter into the dangerous regions of theory and metaphysics, and to risk the loss of what we at present enjoy, for the sake of those uncertain blessings, which any other code of laws might possibly administer.

nister. Attached, both from interest and gratitude, to that constitution which has been transmitted to us by our ancestors, which was acquired by their vigour and perseverance, and sealed with their blood, we felt no inclination to engage in new experiments. Ever since its establishment, the nation has continued to prosper, which is the surest criterion of its value. Happy at home, and respected abroad, this enviable situation has arisen entirely from the influence of our laws on our manners. Without any extraordinary natural advantages, we have long held the political balance, and have often been astonished at the vast extent of our own resources. Equally sheltered from the scorching rays of despotic power, and the violent blasts of democratic rage, we repose under the true tree of liberty, whose branches are able to protect us against every tempest. This is the tree round which the French perceived we were resolved to rally—They saw, with grief, our fixed determination to defend the sacred spot on which it grew and flourished. They found that our laws were enthroned in our hearts, and defended by a panoply which they assailed in vain.

The French, at length, perceived that all their machinations must eventually terminate in an exposure of the folly of attempting to alienate our affections from our constitution. At first, indeed, by dint of money, and by an artful and assiduous activity, they met with some trifling encouragement.

ment. Their opinions were assented to by some few, who were too stupid to understand their own interests, or too depraved to pursue the interests of their country. At one time, even the Republican party, small as it was, ventured to avow itself. Blinded by their prejudices, or misled by their hopes, they flattered themselves that they could create an insurrection, which, if it fell short of subverting the government, would, at least, occasion much disturbance and embarrassment. Daily associations were formed; societies were convened in different parts of the kingdom; regular communications were established; and they began to imagine that their task, arduous as it was, would be crowned with success. Grown bold from the forbearance of the executive power, they, at last, ventured to feel the pulse of the people. What had hitherto been neglected, on account of the paucity and insignificance of the agents, now appeared in a more unpleasant shape, and a general alarm was diffused through the kingdom. But we all recollect how soon it subsided, and how precipitately this contemptible and desperate faction slunk back from the face of day to the dens of infamy and obscurity.

Government, having been once reduced to the necessity of adopting coercive measures, to stem the audacious inroads of the disaffected, wisely proceeded. The ministry were entrusted with a discretionary power; and Chauvelin, a wretch who

had disgraced the character\* which he pretended to represent, with several hundred of his seditious countrymen, was desired immediately to quit these realms. France took fire at a measure which was calculated to insure our internal peace and prosperity, and to render her plans of aggrandizement abortive. We continued, with activity, our warlike preparations, and, as she had previously determined on a rupture, in case of failing in an attempt to enfeeble us by her doctrines, and to dissolve our government, she now formally declared war.

The first hostile act which the French committed against us, augured the injustice and rapacity which have since attended their arms. All the English vessels, in their ports, were detained and confiscated, not only in violation of a particular treaty,† by which it was stipulated that, under such circumstances, a specified time should be allowed for their departure; but in contempt of the general practice of nations. Thus was the strife begun by a scandalous breach of faith.

If we could have preserved peace on reasonable and honourable terms, I am convinced that we should never have engaged in hostilities. We were

\* Every one must have remarked the spirit of sedition which pervades all those papers which Chauvelin transmitted, in his pretended political character, to Lord Grenville. These were the public documents of the good will of his nation.

† The Commercial Treaty.



happy and flourishing, and, certainly, could have no propensity to implicate ourselves in a war, from which little could be expected but an accumulation of burdens, and an effusion of human blood. Yet the folly or the malignity of some has induced them to insinuate, and to insist, that nothing but the ambitious projects of Mr. Pitt could have involved us in the present contest. But can any reasonable and moderate man allow himself to be swayed by a position which departs so egregiously from every suggestion of common sense? Mr. Pitt, since he was first placed at the head of administration, had steadily pursued one consistent plan, which embraced the extension of our commerce and the reduction of the national debt. All his views were directed towards the accomplishment of these two points, and all his glory emanated from the success which the wisdom of his measures insured. His foresight, his judgement, his penetration, his vigilance, his assiduity, had been alternately exerted in the mazy and intricate tracks of finance, and he had, at last, established a system which surpassed all expectation, and raised the country to an unexampled pitch of grandeur and prosperity. The national debt was beginning to diminish; several taxes were repealed; the manufactures were flourishing; and both foreign and internal commerce were expanding every day. I do not, therefore, say it is likely, but is it possible, that this plan, which Mr. Pitt had been arranging since his first entrance into office, just as it was beginning to operate,

operate, and to yield beneficial effects, should have been suddenly deserted, and sacrificed at the shrine of a profitless and criminal ambition? Is it possible to conceive that Mr. Pitt should have abandoned the fruits of his indefatigable labours, for eleven years, to gratify a momentary caprice; that he should have forsaken the interests of his country; that he should have checked the exuberant source of his renown, merely for the sake of indulging in an idle and visionary scheme?—It is impossible to maintain such a position by any arguments whatever, and the more we inquire into the origin of the war, the more we shall be convinced that it arose, on our part, from absolute necessity.

The French were, in every instance, the aggressors. They not only insulted us by openly calumniating our government, in the national convention, and by lavishing on us the most indecent invective; but they deputed emissaries to foment disturbances and overturn our constitution; and the moment they were convinced that we were resolutely determined to resist, they declared war.

I am not, however, desirous of drawing any strength to support my arguments from the mere declaration of war; because, for several weeks previous to the commencement of hostilities, it was obvious, that they could not be avoided; and, if France had delayed the declaration much longer, it would, in all probability, have been made by us. I do not, therefore, wish to lay much stress on the declaration, as, without having recourse to an  
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argument which is certainly frivolous in itself, I have an abundance of solid proofs to substantiate my opinion.

The base part which France acted anterior to the declaration, had already rendered a state of warfare necessary; and we had discrimination enough to be convinced, that an open enemy is less dangerous than a false and designing friend. Their public acts so fully declared their intentions, that had the Minister disregarded them, and suffered us to remain in a defenceless state, he would have been guilty of treason to his country, and would have merited the odium and resentment of all good citizens. It was his duty to be prepared against an event, which, however to be regretted, he was certain would befall us.

Circumstances turned out as every rational man had foretold, and the war commenced. Fortunately our exertions had placed us on a respectable footing, and we were enabled to enter the lists against our ancient adversaries, without dejection or dismay. Recurring to the recollection of our former victories; depending on the native courage and patriotism of Britons; and, above all, relying on the justice of our cause; we certainly had plausible grounds to expect, that the conflict would be shortly terminated, and that our efforts would be crowned with success. And the French, fortunately for themselves and the world, would probably have been subdued in the course of the last campaign, had they lived under a regular government, and only  
resorted

resorted to that system of defence which is consistent with justice, humanity, and reason. I say, consistent with justice, humanity, and reason, because, from the forcible means which the ruling faction have lately employed, it is plainly demonstrated, that the inclinations of the nation are not consulted; but, that they are dragged out, like devoted victims, to fight for a cause which they are convinced is pregnant with misery and destruction, and which they would willingly desert.

As many base and designing men have endeavoured to work on the passions of the multitude, by extolling the liberty which is enjoyed in France, and lamenting the slavery which disgraces and oppresses the subjects of these kingdoms, I shall take a cursory review of the governments of each country, from which it will instantly appear, which is entitled to our attachment and respect, and which deserves our abhorrence and execration.

Since the first suspension and imprisonment of Louis XVI. the ruling powers in France have proceeded in a regular climax, through the various gradations of guilt. Often have we been so astounded at their ferocious deeds, that we have exclaimed. Human depravity has now reached its utmost pinnacle; its resources are now exhausted; and here it must stop. Yet we have found vice, after a pause, as if sinking under fatigue, revive, and exceed those bounds which imagination had traced. Hurried into the whirlwind of prejudice and passion, they have waded through the tempestuous

pestuous ocean of disorder and guilt. They have successively adopted the most frantic schemes, and, acting under the influence of an unexampled delirium, have thought that no antagonist could withstand them. Flushed with victory, and already in possession of Nice, Savoy, and a rich and extensive portion of the Empire, they meditated universal conquest. When they displayed the banner of profanation and vice, they expected that mankind would kneel, and worship it. They imagined that Europe would fall prostrate before them, and that they would speedily be able to erect the whole world into a nominal republic, over which they would despotically domineer.

After having insulted their Sovereign by every species of indignity; after having heaped on him a load both of cruelty and contempt, they basely instituted a mock-trial; accused him of crimes which he had never committed; and, after having denied him privileges which were accorded to the meanest of his subjects, passed sentence on him in a most summary manner, and condemned him to suffer an ignominious death.—

*Hæc finis Priami fatorum ; hic exitus illum  
Sorte tulit, Trojam incensam et prolapsa videntur  
Pergama, tot quondam populis terrisque superbum  
Regnatorem Asiæ. Jacet ingens littore truncus,  
Avulsumque humeris caput, et sine nomine corpus.*

This was the debt of gratitude which Frenchmen thought fit to pay to virtue in distress. One of the

best Kings who ever graced the Throne of France, a fate was reserved for him, from which vice, through the whole duration of the Monarchy, had been uniformly protected. But his misfortunes arose from an excess of meekness and goodness. Had he been of a less yielding nature, he might have been more fortunate.—Convinced that the Prerogatives of his Crown, when placed in the hands of a vicious Prince, must be detrimental to the happiness and interests of his people, he wished to surrender those which were found oppressive, and to establish a government on the basis of justice and humanity. Every consideration was subordinate to the welfare of his subjects. Louis XIV. who certainly was one of the most tyrannic and profligate Princes that ever swayed a scepter, was adored; whilst Louis XVI. whose good qualities so eminently preponderated, that his imperfections must sink into oblivion, was butchered on a scaffold.—The basest act which ever stained the character of a nation, and which must brand its perpetrators with eternal infamy! Vile, ignominious people! Whilst Louis XIV. tyrannised over you, he was your idol; you trembled in his presence; you crouched at his feet; you kissed your very chains. But when a Prince was placed on the throne, who was calculated to make you happy, and who submitted to every mortification and disgrace, rather than shed your blood; you first undermined his authority, by practising arts which were concealed under the cloak of attachment

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ment and respect, and, when he was no longer to be dreaded, you appeared in your native colours, and sacrificed him at the shrine of the most infamous and criminal vengeance. Men, who are actuated by similar sentiments, are only fitted for the yoke of slavery. They cannot bear the luminous rays of rational liberty; but, if relieved for a moment from the weight of their fetters, they enter on the wide expansion of cruelty and depredation, and war against innocence and worth.

When the unfortunate Charles was brought to the block in this country, and not without some appearance of justice; for he certainly was as anxious to strengthen his Prerogatives, as Louis was willing to resign those which had been transmitted to him by his ancestors, and which he legally possessed, how differently were the sentiments of the people expressed! The execution of Louis met with general approbation; but Charles was condemned to die by a faction, which, although formidable in point of power, was inconsiderable in number. Instead of the acclamations which attended the exit of Louis, Charles departed, surrounded by his people, whose solemn silence was only disturbed by sighs, and other tokens of contrition and grief. Although he had brought numberless calamities on his country, when the hour of separation arrived, his people relented, and would willingly have rescued him from his fate. When a king appeared on the scaffold as a malefactor, they

thought that the punishment exceeded the guilt, and they departed from the fatal spot, not exulting, and dancing, and singing; but with dejected countenances and heavy hearts.

When the French, by the murder of their Sovereign, had stamped their proceedings with the seal of infamy; when they had formally abjured all return to allegiance; when they had called forth the indignation and curses of mankind; they thought they might as well proceed in a tragedy, which had commenced with such a dreadful scene. They, therefore, boldly stepped forward on the stage, determined to explore the regions of barbarity and desolation; to go in quest of the most remote and unfrequented paths of guilt; and to practise every crime which the most wanton and depraved ingenuity could invent. One act of impiety and destruction followed another, with a celerity which future generations will scarcely credit. One moment we find them publicly ridiculing religion, disavowing the existence of a God, profaning his altars, and butchering his ministers; the next, dissolving every social and moral tie, and tearing asunder every link which can attach man to man, or insure the advantages and comforts which result from society; the next, invading personal liberty and individual property, and plundering the rich that they may tyrannise over the poor. We observe, at short intervals, different factions springing up, and, as one is overpowered, like the heads of the Hydra, it is immediately



immediately replaced by another, who act, if possible, a more atrocious part. And had they not a range of crimes sufficiently wide, without wreaking their barbarous and pitiful revenge on a defenceless woman? And is this the people who were once so famed for courtesy, who were the guardians of the female sex, the professed admirers of beauty, and among whom, to have been a woman was a recommendation to their compassion and protection? Yes, this is the self-same people, who a few years since were commended and admired for their politeness, their gallantry, their humanity; who cultivated the arts and sciences with zeal and success; who, by their munificence, rendered their country the favourite asylum of talents and merit; and who, from their hospitality and agreeable manners, were entitled to those encomiums which were lavished on them by strangers from every quarter of the globe. How this charming picture vanishes, when we behold them, several months after the murder of their King; when they had time to reflect; when the paroxysms of party rage must have subsided; and the wanderings of a deluded imagination might have been corrected; preparing, a second time, to exhibit to the world a scene, if possible, more heinous and atrocious! In the records of villany, where shall we find an act so distantly removed from the paths of honour and rectitude? Where shall we discover the public voice, acceding to the condemnation of a Queen, merely because Fortune had placed her

on a throne, and the sentiments of nature and duty had attached her to her husband? Even if she had committed crimes which merited chastisement, had she not sufficiently suffered? Was not the loss of a beloved husband, her own sorrows, and those of her family, which must have sharpened her afflictions; her degradation from a throne, the accumulated insults of her people, the horrors of a prison, enough to expiate a few levities of character, and a few venial transgressions? But neither these considerations, neither the recollection of her exalted birth, and her unparalleled hardships, nor the remembrance of that beauty which, although then prematurely faded from an excess of grief and suffering, once animated every heart, and was the admiration of every eye, could no longer excite compassion in the flinty breasts of Frenchmen, or screen her from their unmerited resentment. Like the savages who exult in the writhings of a foe, whilst he is expiring under their torture, they saw her perish, not only without a sigh, but with every testimony of inward satisfaction and brutal joy.

What a dreadful, what a degrading change of sentiment and manner! Who could ever have conceived that a people, who had made such advances in the refinements of life, should have so suddenly embraced the erroneous notions, and imitated the bloody deeds of a savage tribe? Some centuries ago, when Europe was immersed in ignorance, and every vestige of learning, elegance, and ingenuity was obliterated from the face of the earth, the peculiarity

culiarity of its fate was occasioned by an irresistible cause. It was invaded by myriads of barbarians, whose inroads no opposition could withstand; and whose object was, when they had gained possession of a country, to make establishments in it, and either by extirpating the inhabitants, or discouraging the progress of the arts and sciences, to reduce every thing to the level of their own gross and immoral conceptions. And, indeed, before these irruptions became formidable, every kind of learning had been gradually declining, so that the efforts which were made to complete its overthrow did not meet with any vigorous resistance. But, in France, we find a people who, without any external compulsion, are warring against virtue, religion, politeness, and humanity; who are applying the axe to the root of sensibility; who are striving to convert men into wild beasts; and who are effecting this horrid revolution, not from necessity, or any conviction of its utility, but from absolute wantonness and depravity of heart.

At the commencement of their troubles the French might have instituted a wise and happy form of government. In the Constituent Assembly, there were undoubtedly many men of information and talents; but they began with an error, which attended them throughout their deliberations, and finally ruined the undertaking in which they were embarked. They never reflected that all reforms and changes must be gradually introduced; that the proper crisis must be watched; that men cannot  
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make any very rapid progress in improvement ; and that, before the work of emancipation is commenced, the minds of men must be prepared to receive those impressions which it necessarily generates. Unacquainted with the true nature of liberty, they exceeded, in every instance, those sober bounds which discretion has traced ; and, abandoning maxims, whose justness and aptitude experience has ascertained, they entered into a wild discussion of speculative points. Neither perceiving, nor understanding the wide difference between practice and theory, they endeavoured to renovate the very nature of man, and to reduce him to a state which was suited to imbibe their impressions. They never considered that laws, which might be congenial to an infant country, could never be applied, with advantage or success, to an ancient and numerous people, whose habits, whose prejudices, and whose vices were contending against their introduction. Thus, when they attempted to reduce their ideal government to practice, they found that it was quite inadequate to the means which it was proposed to answer. Not having consulted the temper and the inclinations of the people, they consequently failed. This fatal trial roused into a flame the crude and unsettled conceptions of men with regard to government. They had seen liberty, without comprehending it ; they had tasted it, without knowing how to enjoy it. The passions of the multitude, once broken loose from the restraint of laws, were not to be easily repressed. The charm was now dispelled

dispelled which had enamoured them of their ancient constitution, and, rushing into the opposite extreme, they were clamorous after a republican form of government. Every branch of metaphysics was investigated; new experiments were made, which proved as unsuccessful as the preceding ones; one constitution was supplanted by another; till, at last, the scene was closed, by the establishment of a government the most odious and oppressive that was ever planned.

The system of despotism which at present lacerates France is the most execrable and nefarious production that was ever imposed on the credulity of mankind. Not one gleam of freedom shines upon it. On which ever side we survey it, it is replete with deformity.—There is nothing in it which can excite our attachment, or conciliate our esteem: and, whilst we are dwelling on it, we are only reviewing an heterogeneous compendium of absurdity and vice. Built on the wreck of reason and humanity, its only supports are cruelty and fear. Domestic harmony is destroyed, hateful suspicion is generated, and the tribunal of mercy is crumbled to dust. The hand of justice is no longer extended for the protection of the innocent; but a bloody deity, who has assumed her venerable name, appalling and exterminating as he stalks through a land of desolation and guilt, leaves every where the traces of his barbarous footsteps. We behold Robespierre invested with a power, which exceeds what the most bloody tyrant ever possessed, and

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exerting it in the promotion of more atrocious ends. How often has the dreadful massacre of St. Bartholomew been renewed ! How often have the streets of Paris been drenched with human blood ! Who can count the number of victims that have been basely immolated at Marseilles, Lyons, Toulon, Nantes, and Bourdeaux ? What corner of France is not polluted with blood, and strewed with carnage ?

*Crudelis ubique*

*Luctus, ubique pavor, et plurima mortis imago.*

Is not every man torn from his family, dragged to the army by force, and threatened with proscription and death, if he refuse to prolong the miseries of his country ? Where is the rich man who has not been persecuted, and deprived of his property ? And how many thousands are there who, after having lingered for several months, on false accusations, in dark and unwholesome prisons, have been conducted from confinement to death ? Where has not the fatal guillotine diffused horror and desolation ?—And if widows were to be heard deploring the loss of their murdered husbands, or if children were to weep for the return of their unhappy fathers, they would be immediately condemned to suffer the same fate.

The essence of liberty consists in a knowledge of what the laws allow, and what they condemn. With such a guide to direct him, a man immediately perceives the line of his duty, and is satisfied, that as long as he keeps within those boundaries



which are prescribed, he is safe. But when the laws are fluctuating every day, and are made subservient to the views of interest and convenience, who can know when he transgresses, or what actions will occasion the loss or the security of his life? In France, every one may, no doubt, commend the Jacobin club, and bestow the incense of panegyric on the proceedings of the convention; but who would insure the head of him who professed opposite sentiments? Every one, in short, is permitted to praise tyranny, and bloodshed, and vice; but commendations on virtue, moderation, and liberty, are the forerunners of death. And who are reaping the harvest of these destructive measures? None but the faction who issue them, and who glory in sacrificing their country to their avarice and ambition. The rich have been persecuted and robbed; the manufacturer is obliged to sell the produce of his labour at so depreciated a rate, that it almost amounts to a community of goods; the poor are starving from an absolute scarcity of bread. The elegancies and superfluities of life have vanished long since, and the wants and necessities are now beginning to disappear. Such is the glorious reign of French liberty and equality, and such the effects which it has produced.

It must, however, be admitted, that this strange and unaccountable infatuation of the people, has chiefly enabled the French to make such astonishing efforts, and to resist with such success the exertions of the combined armies. The whole resources of the kingdom are at the entire disposal of the pre-

vailing party, who have concentrated all its riches and all its bodily force into one focus. Both agriculture and commerce have been almost totally neglected, and every thing has been applied to the maintenance of the war. The notion, however, of raising men in the mass is absurd in the highest degree. On some extraordinary occasion it may, perhaps, prove advantageous; but an attempt to reduce it to a regular system, and to provide for an army, consisting of such a numerous body of men, for any length of time, must be fruitless and impracticable. Inspired by the hopes of pillage, and intoxicated with a plentiful supply of strong liquors, they may possibly be kept together for one campaign; but they are too unwieldy an instrument to manage long. These unnatural exertions must, therefore, exhaust them in the end. Whilst their expenditure increases, the means of replenishing their coffers diminish, and the period, perhaps, is not far distant, when they will be obliged to acknowledge their weakness.—When we consider the fate which has overtaken so many of their general officers, we are astonished that men should be still found hardy enough to aspire at any high and ostensible military station; for moderate success is no security, and to escape from the axe they must have fortune in their power. They must not only act prudently; but they must act luckily: they must not only perform their duty; but they must perform miracles. Yet when we turn over the page of history, and reflect how men, in all ages,  
have

have been stimulated by ambition and presumption; how much the allurements of power conceal the dangers; how easily we are deceived, when judging of our own abilities, whilst our apparent interest is concerned; how naturally we flatter ourselves, that we shall be able to avoid those errors which our predecessors have committed; and, above all, how willingly men of desperate fortune embrace every opportunity of recommending themselves to notice, our wonder ceases.

From this horrid prospect, let us now turn our eyes on the fair edifice of the British constitution, a government which is peculiarly adapted to promote and to secure the happiness of mankind. Here it is that true liberty flourishes; here it is that the true notions of equality prevail. Is there, in this country, any man so abject as to be disregarded by the laws, as to be unheltered from the injustice of his superiors? Is there, on the other hand, any man, however exalted his station, however affluent his circumstances, who can commit a crime with impunity. Both the rich and the poor are equally amenable to the tribunal of justice, where innocence is uniformly protected, and guilt uniformly punished. Those who make liberty consist in a power to act, in every respect, according to the dictates of inclination; and who define equality by an equal participation of property and rank, deduce their arguments from principles altogether false and untenable. It is totally impossible that an institution, founded on such vague notions, can ever obtain



obtain among men. Even in a state of nature it cannot exist. Among savages, we see the chief distinguished from his followers, the active from the indolent, the strong from the weak. But, in civilized nations, where the mind of man has such an extensive range, these differences must be much more numerous and palpable. Were you to reduce the inhabitants of these kingdoms to-day to that visionary standard, would they continue there to-morrow? Would not the thrifty accumulate, whilst the dissolute wasted; would not the industrious thrive, whilst the lazy failed; would not ingenuity and dulness, virtue and vice, learning and ignorance, meet with different rewards? To establish such a system you must either annihilate the different propensities which impel men to different pursuits; and you must endow every man with the same talents, the same accomplishments, and actuate him by the same motives; or you must every day restore things to the original level, and effect a revolution once in four and twenty hours: and even then, during at least the greater part of that confined period, inequality would triumphantly reign. But, for the sake of argument, allowing that men had the inclination and power of submitting to such an ordinance, what would be the consequence? Why this—The man of talents and industry, finding that the fruits of his labours were unjustly wrested from him, to supply the indolent and abandoned, would no longer devote himself to such profitless occupations; the whole kingdom  
would



would exhibit one barren waste ; and half its inhabitants would perish from absolute want. And, indeed, in France, although they have cajoled the people by an abuse of language, where is the pretended equality of rank to be found ? They have, it is true, extirpated the antient nobility, and decreed that their titles shall never be revived ; but have they not been replaced by scoundrels and traitors, who enjoy their privileges under different names ? If they have abolished the epithets of Duke, and Marquis, and Baron, have they not their Ministers, their Presidents, their Generals, and their Colonels ? But it is of no consequence by what term a man is distinguished ; for all terms, before they are applied, are indifferent. And even after they have been applied, if the power and influence, which are annexed to any particular term, are dissolved, and conferred under another, our former association of ideas can no longer exist ; but the one loses a signification which the other acquires. This is the artifice which they have adopted in France. They have changed, but they have not abolished titles. Power and distinction still survive ; a proof that even vice cannot be supported without subordination. Gradations of rank must, in fact, always exist among men. If we withdraw from society those honourable distinctions which we are accustomed to accord to merit, we from that moment annihilate every incitement to virtue, and crush all those incentives which spur us on in the pursuit of fame.

Rational.

Rational liberty, like every other good, consists in a medium between two extremes ; and can never be meant to extend in its signification to impossibilities. All it implies is an equal defence from cruelty and usurpation ; an equal protection of our lives and our reputation ; and an equal security for the enjoyment of that property which our labours, our abilities, or our virtues have acquired. In this sense it flourishes in these kingdoms, in its full extent ; and in this sense only can it be beneficial to mankind. Our constitution, being founded on the immutable principles of justice and wisdom, is likely to defy, for many future ages, the assaults of malevolence and time—Like a tower, which stands upon a rock, it may despise the rage of contending elements. Whilst Britons venerate freedom, and retain a love for their native land, it can never fall. But is an axiom universally admitted, that no human institution can be totally devoid of blemish. We must, therefore, allow, that the government which approaches nearest to perfection is the most entitled to our attachment and defence. Compounded as our constitution is of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, we have so happily blended them together, as to extract the sweets from all. The admirable disposition by which each principle, in its turn, continues to support and control the other two, is a secret which we alone have discovered, and which has been the constant admiration of surrounding empires. The result of their collective powers has, for such a length of time, shed  
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on us its benign influence, that we are fully impressed with the conviction, that of all systems of polity which have ever been reduced to practice, our own is the best. Equally removed from the abuses of despotic tyranny, and republican licentiousness, we are neither agitated by civil commotions, nor appalled by sanguinary decrees ; but we sail, with security, on the unruffled surface of happiness and tranquillity. What but our government, and the sagacity and prudence of the people, which have instructed them how to appreciate it, have advanced us to our present greatness? Neither peculiarly distinguished for extent of domain, nor fruitfulness of soil, nor exuberance of population ; still we have gained the pre-eminence over other nations far more rich than ourselves in natural resources, and, in spite of their endeavours, have kept possession of our political rank.—What but our government, and the good dispositions of the people, have procured us these advantages? I do not appeal to the heart, but to the understanding. The British constitution is not the work of a day : it has stood the test of ages ; and has showered down innumerable blessings on those who have lived under it. And shall we, merely for the sake of novelty, destroy this venerable pile, and root up the foundation on which it is reared? Shall we abandon certainty for uncertainty? Shall we allow a band of ferocious robbers to legislate for us? Shall we desert the fair mansion of truth, to wander in the boundless space of speculation? Shall we quit the



shore of happiness and peace, to embrace our misery and ruin ?

As I have already observed, no government, which is framed by man, can be without imperfections. On trivial blemishes opinions are always so contradictory, that it is difficult to ascertain, with any degree of certainty, what changes would promote melioration. In points of greater importance, the advantages and disadvantages being more striking, our reason is guided by more positive rules: and it certainly should be the object of a legislator to remove every evident oppression, and to render every branch of the constitution as complete as the nature of man will admit. When, however, any material alteration is to be accomplished, we must not act with rashness. Every concurring circumstance must be weighed with impartiality and deliberation; and, before we engage in the arduous and dangerous task of reform, we should be fully convinced, that what is to be substituted in the place of what is to be annulled, will be competent to promote the advantages of the community. We cannot proceed too warily; for of all follies, that is the greatest, which leads us to part with a real for an imaginary good. On these grounds, I should object, at least for the present, most unequivocally, to any alterations in the actual mode of representation. This is not the moment for agitating so important a question. At any period, I doubt whether it would produce salutary consequences: at the present, I am persuaded  
that



that it is pregnant with mischief. Let the awful lesson, which France has exhibited to the world, be a serious and eternal memento to ourselves and to future generations, of the danger of commencing the subversion of an antient government. Because a few factious people are clamorous, and assure us that we groan under burdens which our feelings disavow, are we to credit their assertions, and to run immediately to arms? Because they tell us that liberty flourishes in France, and slavery in Britain, shall we listen to such base misrepresentations? No; men who have always known how to protect themselves against the infringement of their rights, are not to be alarmed at such idle rumours. I depend on the moderation and the good sense of my countrymen, who, I am certain, will never allow themselves to be deluded by the daring assertions of those, who only step forward at particular periods to display the malignancy of their hearts, and who, after a short and inglorious struggle, are forced to retreat to the haunts of ignominy and vice. Men of this description will be found in every country; but, in this, although, by their secret machinations, they may sometimes be able to ruffle the surface of human affairs; I trust, they will attempt, in vain, to raise a storm. Born for the curse of their fellow-creatures, it is only in times of commotion, that they venture on the stage to display their destructive and malignant talents. The seeds of sedition and dissatisfaction are so rooted in their hearts, that were a government to be traced by the un-

erring hand of the Almighty, they would be impious enough to question its perfection, and to express their discontent.

“ Nam semper in civitate, quæ opes nullæ sunt, bonis invident, malos extollunt ; vetera odere, nova exoptant ; odio suarum rerum mutari omnia student ; turba, atque seditionibus sine cura aluntur : quoniam egestas facile habetur sine damno.”

Before, therefore, we desire a reform in parliament, let us insure some positive advantage. Before we subvert one system, let us prepare another to replace it, and of such a nature as to be worthy of incurring the risk. Let us not first destroy, and leave what is to be erected or repaired to the hand of chance. But many, who have been very vociferous against the present mode of election, have still had the candour to declare, that, notwithstanding the palpable objections which crowd our system of representation, they would be at a loss to devise a plan, in which defects, as numerous and strong, would not obtain. What then are they cavilling for ; and why not remain as we are ? The principal object which should be attended to in elections, is to insure success to those, who are most entitled to the confidence and respect of their fellow citizens, and who are most likely to guard and to advance the interests of their country. We should always desire that the representatives of the nation should be distinguished for their property, their integrity, and their talents ; and, so long as we are assured that members of this

description fit in the House of Commons, it can be of little consequence to the real welfare of the state, whether they be the choice of five thousand, or five hundred thousand electors. Whilst our laws are entrusted to the care of those who are most interested in their preservation, we need be under no alarm: for, it is not probable that, for the sake of oppressing us, they should subscribe to measures which would be detrimental to themselves in a ten-fold degree! Having more to lose, they have more to dread from a submission to those maxims, which would affect the liberty of the subject. But is not the House of Commons filled with senators who rank under the above-mentioned classes? By what means could we insure to ourselves more respectable representatives? Increase the number of electors, could they return better or more independent men? But it is said to be a great grievance, that so many useful citizens should be excluded from the choice of those, to whom are consigned the charge and defence of their most valuable privileges. And if you were to admit them, would not you increase the discontent of those who were rejected? The truth is, the line must be drawn; where, is of little importance, so long as it insures the election of those who are worthy of so sacred a trust. Why, therefore, should we desire a change, from which no good can result, and which may be productive of numberless evils? Even at present, amongst the lowest description of electors, how few are there who value the privilege of voting  
beyond



beyond the price which they can obtain for their voice? It avails little, in their eyes, who is elected; but they regard him as the fittest man, who can afford to pay the best price. If it were possible to deprive them of this bait, they would never give themselves the trouble of appearing to poll: a proof that it is not the privilege of saying yes or no, once in seven years, which they hold dear. Augment then the number of this class of voters, you only increase a waste of money, which is injurious to their industry and morals, and, by opening a wider door to bribery and corruption, could only tend to bad purposes. And if you grant the privilege to one, why refuse it to another? The rights of nature, it would be immediately asserted, are equal; and the beggar and the man of wealth have the same claims to notice. Must we then plant a dagger in the vitals of our constitution, by introducing universal suffrage? In antient times this experiment has been frequently resorted to, and has never yet produced any thing, but civil commotions and general discontent.—Assertions have, indeed, been industriously circulated, that our degeneracy is evident; that we are willingly deserting the pure principles of our constitution; and that we are making rapid strides towards the maintenance of despotism. But egregious falsehoods cannot now mislead us. We must first be informed in what instance parliament has departed from the true spirit of our government, and in what particular the power of the crown has been extended.



extended. Facts are the only arguments which, in a question of such delicacy and moment, can recommend themselves to public attention.

I shall now take a review of the last campaign—

When the war first broke out between this country and France, the French had made conquests on every side. From the fatal moment, at which the Duke of Brunswick had been prevailed on to withdraw his forces, success had attended on their arms. The rapid advances which they made, without any resistance, astonished and alarmed all Europe; and the politics of that period are still involved in a cloud of mystery which the public eye cannot penetrate. That such vast and important acquisitions should have been ceded to them, without contention; that one strong place should have been abandoned after another; and that the French should have been suffered quietly to take possession of them, appears to be so unaccountable a mistake, that no one will pretend to justify or excuse it. A general panic seems to have diffused itself through the retreating army, and the French were considerably elated and assisted by the predilection which the inhabitants of their new conquests evinced for their leveling principles. They certainly are admirably fitted to delude the multitude, and it is flattering to human vanity to reduce a superior to the common level. But when they began to operate, all the idle dreams of happiness vanished, and those who had cherished them, were left to deplore their blindness and folly.

Thus,

Thus, however, the French conquered without fighting : thus they obtained advantages, not from their own prowess, but from the infatuation and supineness of their adversaries. They marched into Nice ; they over-ran the Netherlands ; they took possession of Franckfort and other strong holds ; they advanced into Holland, and threatened the destruction of the United Provinces. Such was, twelve months ago, the lamentable, the humiliating aspect of Europe ! It was successfully invaded in different quarters by a band of savages, whose exertions were aided by the arts of civilization. But their triumphs were not destined to last, and their laurels faded almost as soon as they were gathered. When we acceded to the grand alliance which was formed in defence of justice and order, against the attacks of anarchy and guilt, the cause, from that moment, acquired vigour. The native spirit and perseverance of Britons were regarded as an earnest of success. We imparted strength to every arm, and confidence to every breast. And their reliance on us was not without reason ; for, it must be remembered, that it was the intrepid bravery and glorious example of our countrymen which snatched Holland from the jaws of perdition, and gave the first turn to affairs. When the French once received a check, their discomfiture, in different parts, rapidly succeeded, and their retreat was the counterpart of their invasion. They fled as precipitately as they had pursued, and the salvation of Europe was insured. Shortly after this reverse,

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we find them circumscribed (Nice excepted) within their antient confines, and the allied armies, in their turn, acting offensively. Several strong and important places, on their frontiers, have been successively yielded to us. If our advances into France have been very gradual, we must not be surpris'd; fortified towns cannot be taken without much time and labour. Our acquisitions, on the whole, have been greater than we could expect, and the position of affairs on the continent has undergone a most astonishing and favourable change. But if we turn our eyes towards other parts of the world, a wide field of glory and triumph opens to view. In the East Indies, the French have been entirely dispossessed of their territories: an event which must be productive of great advantages to this country; and, I hope, we shall, when the period of peace arrives, be sufficiently on our guard to prevent their re-establishment in that quarter of the globe. All the disturbances which we have, for many years past, been subjected to, have arisen at their instigation; and, although we at last terminated them with honour and success, yet it was impossible to depend on the blessings of a permanent peace, whilst the councils of the princes of the country were influenced and swayed by the evil dispositions of an artful and restless people. In the West Indies the prospect is still more flattering. Tobago has already submitted to our arms. From our present footing in St. Domingo, we may rationally expect that the French part of that rich and

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flourish-



flourishing island will soon be annexed to the British Empire; and Martinico, Guadaloupe, and St. Lucia, must also fall under our domination. Thus will the colonial strength of France be annihilated; a loss which must strike at the very root of her existence as a commercial nation, and transfer half her power and riches into our hands. Our temporary possession of Toulon enabled us, also, to reap many important and durable advantages. The navy of France never sustained such a fatal shock, and although some discontent has arisen from the hasty manner in which it was evacuated, and which, indeed, prevented our triumph from being complete; yet, what we accomplished was more than we could have expected, in the ordinary course of things, from the aggregate efforts of a ten years' war. We have, to be sure, in some instances met with failures and disappointments; yet they are trivial in general, and may be easily repaired. Such is the picture of a campaign which, if not the most glorious, is certainly the most prosperous, which this country, or indeed any other, in modern times, ever experienced.

But people have been very much alarmed on account of the precarious issue of the war, and our supposed inability to support the contest for any length of time. Every public calamity, which has arisen in the course of the year, has been attributed to that source, and the artful insinuations of malicious men have, in many instances, been too successful.



When the commercial world, some months ago, sustained such a signal shock ; when the depression of credit, and the stagnation of trade, spread a general alarm ; wretches immediately started up, and exclaimed ; behold the pernicious consequences of the war completing the ruin of our country ! Those who had been unfortunate lent a willing ear to their propagations, and seconded their sentiments. Let us impartially examine how far they were consistent with truth. The moment of the attack, no doubt, added terrors to the calamity, and it was a circumstance, peculiarly unfortunate for the nation, that it so speedily followed the commencement of hostilities : but are we, on that account, to attribute it entirely to that cause ? An appeal to experience, which is certainly the safest criterion to judge by, will evince the contrary. A variety of remarkable events had combined, to render the situation of the commercial world extremely critical ; and, even if we had not been involved in the war, the deranged state of affairs on the continent must, at first, have been severely felt. When France would no longer suffer us to remain at peace, another bitter and baneful ingredient was certainly added to the evil. A state of warfare must always, undoubtedly, produce a bad effect on commerce. It must always confine the intercourse between different countries, check the spirit of adventure, and occasion a comparative scarcity of money. But is it to be hence inferred, that it will strike at the root of all industry, and exhaust the channels of all wealth ? Surely

we have been engaged in wars more unpopular, more expensive, and more disastrous, in every point of view, than the present; yet did they ever threaten the annihilation of our trade? The war cannot, therefore, have been the sole cause of those unparalleled distresses. That it may have hastened them, I admit; but, from the nature of the disorder, its termination must have been calamitous, and the longer it was delayed the more violent and extensive must have been its devastations. We must then seek for a more powerful momentum. The fact is, that the credit of the country had been strained to a pitch which it was unable to support. People, from a spirit of enterprize or gain, had been stimulated to grasp at projects which exceeded their competence, and had ventured to trade, in an unwarrantable degree, beyond their capitals. They were gradually betrayed into concerns, from which they could not extricate themselves. A fictitious capital, raised by a forced circulation of paper, which must always engender distrust, and prove ruinous in the end, was the artifice to which they were driven to delay the blow which they could not escape. This evil extended itself to an excess beyond all computation. Men persuaded themselves, that they were prospering, because the balance in their books was in their favour, and, enlarging their connections, they were eventually enticed into measures which defied the possibility of redemption. Deluded by their own devices, luxury and extravagance kept pace with their ideal riches, and

and the numbers who built on this flippery foundation, occasioned a competition which reduced, in an injurious proportion, the fair profits of trade. This exuberance at last, however, indicated symptoms of decay : its natural effects began to appear, and when the paper was to be realized, the illusion vanished. Those who had trafficked on this irrational plan, not having funds to support their engagements, could not consequently fulfil them; and when the chain, which united and upheld them, broke, exigency immediately sprung up, and a general scene of confusion ensued. When gentlemen of real property found those, who were reputed to be so, falling on every side, an alarm was suddenly diffused; they knew not where the evil might stop; and, anxious to secure what remained in their possession, it was instantly withdrawn from the casualties of trade, and locked up till the storm subsided. The natural consequences were, that an artificial scarcity of money was created; confidence was destroyed; consternation was excited; and the manufacturer, finding no demand for his goods, ceased to labour. Much embarrassment might, no doubt, have been prevented, had the Bank stepped forward at this critical juncture, and granted a liberal support to those who were entitled to receive it. The advantages which accrued from the association of the country gentlemen in the north, inform us, how beneficially their more substantial aid might have been accorded. There can be no clearer proof of the justice and fair-

fairness of the above statement, than the quick reversion of affairs to their natural state, the moment Parliament interposed, and offered relief. From the sums which were applied for, it is evident, that pecuniary assistance was not much required. It was a deficiency of confidence which was most felt, and the moment that was restored, the clouds, which were hovering over the commercial hemisphere, dispersed; the channels of industry and wealth were again opened; and the face of things was entirely changed. Surely, this second revolution, if not from good to better, at least from bad to good, could not have been effected, if the war had been the sole origin of the evil; for it is not possible that the effects could be removed by the duration of the cause. This is a fact which I need not endeavour to substantiate, by embellishing it with the flowers of rhetoric, or enforcing it by the strength of argument: it is a self-evident axiom, and he who can discredit it, must be determined to resist every impression of truth.

Though the sudden check, which was given to our commercial intercourse with France, was at first severely felt, yet it has, in the end, proved fortunate. The merchants of that country had, already, been ruined, by the tyranny and injustice of the prevailing faction, who immediately supplanted them in trade, and entered into engagements to such an astonishing amount, that their projects must have terminated in a bankruptcy, which would probably have shaken England to its very foundations.



tions. In another point of view, to counterbalance the temporary inconvenience, several solid advantages present themselves. Although the balance of our trade with France was in our favour, yet the vast consumption of French produce in this country, and the impolitic predilection which we uniformly displayed in favour of their ingenuity and fashions, were, in many instances, prejudicial to our own manufactures. This passion has now entirely subsided, and we begin to believe that we can invent fashions of our own. What was formerly procured from France, and we still wish to possess, our own ingenuity must now supply; and thus, obliged to depend entirely on ourselves, several new and useful manufactures will be gradually introduced. Whilst the French foreign trade to the Levant, the Baltick, and other parts, is totally destroyed, we have every reason to expect that our own will become every day more prosperous; and our evident superiority at sea must enable us to preserve those advantages which our enemies have forfeited. The loss of their fisheries at Newfoundland is, also, an event by which we shall be considerable gainers. Many years of tranquillity must elapse before the French can recover from the effects of their present dissensions; and, at the restoration of peace and order, we shall find them so relaxed by their exertions, that they will not be able to bestow much attention on commercial regulations: they will have every thing to begin, and will hardly have the ability to carry on any manufactures, but  
such

such as can be introduced into an infant country. Thus will all nations be obliged to repair to Great Britain for the productions of art: thus shall we supply with merchandize the whole continent of Europe, and become the emporium of the world.

We have also been loaded with reproaches by the ill-disposed, for having, in a manner, obliged the Dutch to join the alliance. They alledge, that we only consulted our own interest, and inveigled them into the snare. Had it not, it is affirmed, been for our interference, instead of being fettered with the expences of war, they might now be flourishing under the benign influence of peace. But, if we consulted our own interest, it must be owned, that their's was not altogether neglected; for, from the political situation of affairs, the Dutch could not possibly have maintained their neutrality, and if they had not leagued with us, their country must shortly have become a department of France. The French had, by laying open the navigation of the Scheldt, already evinced their hostile disposition. Did they not, in violation of the law of nations, and in contempt of a positive treaty,\* forcibly sail up that river to besiege Antwerp; and, notwithstanding the re-iterated remonstrances of the Dutch against this scandalous and glaring infraction, did they not continue to set them at open defiance, and to declare their fixed determination to deprive them of an exclusive navigation? The riches and naval

\* Treaty of Munster.

force of Holland were objects of too great an importance to be overlooked by the inordinate ambition of the French, and had it not been for our representations they would have acquired them. The Dutch, however, it must be owned, are not very hearty in the cause, nor have they yielded us that assistance which, from their political rank, and their usual energy, we had a right to expect. The dispositions which have been also shewn by individuals, to enter into an illicit traffic, and to supply our enemies with articles which may enable them to prosecute the war with greater vigour, have reflected a disgrace on the whole nation. When frequent instances occur of injuring our country for the sake of private emolument, the proofs of degeneracy are evident, and one cannot help lamenting those acts of perfidy and baseness which degrade a powerful people. It is, however, better that the French should be thus partially assisted, than that they should have the entire management and disposal of their riches and naval strength. Once masters of the United Provinces, their power would be surprisingly augmented. In all former wars, it has uniformly been regarded by statesmen as a political maxim of the last importance, and from which we should never depart, to maintain a strict alliance with the United Provinces. Has Charles II. ever been forgiven for deserting the cause of Holland, and aiding Louis XIV. to conquer it? Has he not always been accused of betraying the true interests of his country, and is it not suspected, even to this



day, that he was biaſſed by motives which ought never to influence the conduct of a King? And is this, then, the moment to diſſolve an antient and advantageous alliance, and to diſregard what has hitherto been accounted an indiſpenſable duty?—Sophiſts may advance what they pleaſe; but I am ſatiſfied, that they will never be able to convince men of integrity and ſenſe.

The management of the national purſe has ſupplied another ſource of cenſure; and much obloquy has been thrown on the Miniſter for being prodigal of the public money. But thoſe, who bring forward theſe accuſations, do not conſider, that when we are once involved in a war, it is true policy to make the moſt vigorous exertions. A parſimonious conduct always proves the moſt expenſive in the end. When our eſtabliſhment is too confined, it is impoſſible to accompliſh any thing of moment. Our hands are always fettered; we muſt adopt a ſyſtem of defence; the war is unneceſſarily protracted; whiſt it laſts we loſe our glory; and when the period of peace arrives, not being able to command terms, we are obliged to ſubmit to inſult and diſgrace. Yet they ſay, admitting all this, why ſhould we ſubſidiſe Hanover and the Prince of Heſſe, and enter into a treaty with the King of Sardinia, by which we bind ourſelves, whiſt the war continues, to pay him annually 200,000l. to maintain his own army, and to defend his own country. My answer is this: When we find ourſelves implicated in a war like



the present, we must view circumstances through a comprehensive medium. We must not only attend to objects which relate immediately to ourselves ; but we must extend our thoughts to more remote considerations. We must calculate, what is most likely to prove beneficial and injurious to the general cause, and endeavour to ascertain the ultimate result. If, after such an investigation, it appear more to our advantage to employ foreign troops than our own, why should we hesitate ? or, if it be evidently of importance to us, that any particular State should be defended, which cannot bear the extraordinary charges of war, why should not we step forward with pecuniary assistance ?—Such is precisely our present case. We are obliged to furnish a certain quota of troops for foreign service, and we find it less expensive to hire them elsewhere than to employ our own. It is also evidently of consequence to the general cause, that the Sardinian dominions, which are the key of Italy, should be defended. The King is not sufficiently opulent, and we assist him. What would be the consequences, if we were to withdraw our support ? Italy would be immediately overrun, and the French, by seizing on the vast treasures which it contains, would acquire fresh resources for carrying on the war. Neither the temples which are dedicated to religion, nor the venerable remains of antiquity, would be respected by these modern barbarians ; nothing would be spared by their avarice and brutality.

If then, the expenses of the year have been great, let us recollect the wonderful exertions which we have made. In no period of our history can an instance be adduced, by which it will appear, that we have armed so considerable a force in so short a time. Owing to the dislike which we have, very naturally and very properly, imbibed to a standing army, our military force, in times of peace, has always been inconsiderable. Thus when a war first breaks out, the difficulty of procuring men is always great. Having a fleet to man and an army to levy, the supply has generally been found so inadequate to the demand, that some time must necessarily expire, before we are empowered to avail ourselves of our resources, and to trust to our strength. The celerity with which we have procured men, at this particular juncture, has arisen from a variety of incidents, but from none more, than from the vigilance and activity of our government.

Whilst, however, I bestow praise where praise is due, I should deviate very widely from that impartiality which I have taken for my guide, did I allow what is censurable to pass unnoticed.

In the department of the Admiralty, there certainly has been some strange neglect and mismanagement. When complaints proceed both from the enemies and the friends of Administration, I cannot conceive that they are altogether groundless. With such a superiority of naval strength as we now possess, we certainly are enabled to attend to  
every

every thing, and even admitting that it is necessary to maintain a strong armament for the defence of our coast, still we have a sufficiency to spare, and to disperse to other quarters. It is said, that we have above a hundred ships of war at Portsmouth, completely equipped. They surely might be much better employed. Is such a vast force necessary to defeat an invasion, which, I am persuaded, was never intended? Mad as the French are, they have still too much prudence left, to make so desperate an attempt. They may talk of it to alarm us; but they will do no more. I will, however, allow, that an enemy should never be despised, and that, considering the various contingencies of war, whatever is within the line of possibility should be guarded against. But, because we should not expose ourselves to risks indiscretely, is it to be hence inferred, that half the Navy of Britain should remain in port? Cannot we spare a few ships to protect our trade, and to prevent the French from infesting our channel, and insulting our flag? We should always have a squadron cruising near our coasts. Let it consist of seven or eight ships of the line, and a few frigates; and the moment it returned let it be replaced by another of the same force. We should then overawe our enemies, and they would be neither so adventurous nor so successful. All assertions are comparative, and when it is recollected how the French Navy is crippled, it has certainly been allowed to accomplish too much. With such a superiority of naval force as  
we



we have, scarcely a French ship should be suffered to float on the seas. As far as regards our officers and sailors, every effort has been made which can redound to their honour, and which is consistent with the native spirit and heroism of Britons. When equal, we always have, and, I trust, we ever shall overcome the French! Every action which has been hitherto fought, has tended to confirm this long-established opinion. I therefore lament, that engagements have been so rare, and that these gallant men have not had more frequent opportunities of displaying their magnanimity and courage.

The affairs of the ordnance likewise afford a very fair subject for animadversion. They have been conducted in a very negligent manner, and our failures on the continent have proceeded almost entirely from our own blindness and inattention. The Noble Duke, who is placed at the head of that important office, has, no doubt, the interest of his country at heart; but he appears to be swayed by motives which ought to be totally unknown to a Minister. Profuseness in articles of expense, and frugality in those points where little can be saved, are a plan, which a person who has the management of important and extensive operations, should never adopt. In times of peace, we ought always to make preparations for war. We have then more leisure, and can better afford the expense; nor should we then be ashamed to shew our arsenal, because it contains no arms. Decision  
also



also is a requisite ingredient in the character of a politician, and is generally the forerunner of good fortune. We should not resolve hastily; but when determinations are once made, the execution of them should be prompt and vigourous. A frequent change of measures occasions not only a loss of time; but it damps the ardour of troops, and endangers success.

*Dimidium facti, qui caput, habet.*

But, although we have met with disappointments, they have not been so considerable but what they may be easily repaired. Adversity is the school of wisdom, and the time of difficulty and danger is the period for a great nation to display its firmness: and, it is to be hoped, that we shall profit, in our future operations, by the experience of what is passed.

As for peace, it is, at least for the present, quite out of the question; for, as it is impossible to obtain it on honourable terms, no good citizen can desire it. Before we can expect peace, the French must be either subdued, or they must abandon those infernal principles, by which they are actuated, and submit to a rational government. Have they not decreed, that they will enter into no compact with any nation whatever, unless, by a preliminary article, it shall consent to cede to them, whatever conquest it has made? And is this, then, to be the indemnification which we are to receive for the loss of so much blood and treasure?

treasure? Are we to allow ourselves to be dictated to by these barbarians, and as if every nerve were relaxed, and every resource exhausted, are we to withdraw from the contest, covered with ignominy and contempt? No;—if we are to fall, let us fall like men, defending a good cause, and acting up to the principles of Englishmen, who have ever preferred death to disgrace. But if they were to relax, and to offer to treat with us on more equal terms, should we be mad enough to listen to them? If we were to commence a negotiation, and to conclude a peace, what security could we have for its duration? Could we rely with any confidence on the professions of a people, who have egregiously departed from the law of nations; who have relinquished every sentiment of honour; who are no longer awed by a sense of religion; who have trampled on the most sacred obligations; who despise justice and mercy; who live by murder, rapine, cruelty, and confiscation; and who have attempted to grace, with the venerable name of liberty, the blackest and most odious tyranny which ever persecuted and degraded the human race?

If, therefore, we can have no security for the duration of peace, or the fulfilment of those engagements which the French might enter into, it surely is neither our interest nor our duty to attend to any overtures whatever. We can place no dependence on the acts or the assurances of a faction, whose reign may terminate to-morrow. If we,  
trusting

trusting to their faith, were to slacken in our exertions, who can pretend to say that they would not avail themselves of our inactivity and credulity? If the combined armies were to disperse, would they disband their troops, or dismantle their towns! If we were to accede to terms of accommodation, could we venture to disarm? When a nation has avowedly dispensed with the most solemn treaties, and flagrantly forfeited all pretensions to good faith, we cannot act too cautiously. Shall we then be frightened into peace, whilst we have such a fleet equipped, and such a numerous and well-appointed army in cantonments, by the chimerical boasts and haughty menaces of a band of daring conspirators? Shall we, after such vigorous and toilsome preparations, allow our enemies a respite by according them a truce? Shall we, merely to gratify them, deprive ourselves of the advantages we have acquired, and ingloriously evacuate, not only our own conquests, but renounce all pretensions to the restoration of those places which they have gained from our Allies? As, in the event of peace, we should be afraid to disarm, we may as well employ that force which we are obliged to maintain. By acting otherwise, we should only augment our own calamities, by bereaving ourselves of the power of annoying our enemies.

Let us then continue to fight, till, at least, there is a prospect of closing the hostile scene with safety and success. Anarchy and Atheism cannot flourish



for ever. Enthusiasm may persuade men to suffer numberless hardships, and to brave every difficulty for a certain time; but what is erected on the basis of disorder cannot be stable, and common sense must, in the end, triumph over mad speculation. No time can consolidate what is the offspring of folly and vice, and the votaries of guilt must, at last, retire from the stage, and yield to the influence of justice and truth. True philosophy must some day return, and, taking pity on the miseries of mankind, will expand its protecting wings over their heads. I already think that I perceive some gleam of returning reason. The people begin to see through the mummery of a government which has deluded them so long. They feel, that they do not enjoy that happiness which was promised them. They know, that every thing is overruled by force; that fear is the main spring of the machine; and that they groan under the most abject slavery. They perceive, that the system which governs them is a compound of artifice and cruelty; that it is built on pernicious and fugitive principles; and that it must, sooner or later, mortify with disease. The period is, perhaps, approaching fast, when this aversion, which they are contracting by degrees, shall break out with an impetuosity which no efforts can resist: and we may then see their government dissolved, as speedily as it was framed. The rich without influence; the manufacturer without employ; the poor without bread; these are dreadful, but convincing arguments. Foolish misguided people! How will you



repent when your reason returns ! With what anguish will you review the situation, to which you have degraded your country, when you are revisited by the sober hours of reflection !— With what sensations of horror and grief will you recollect the catalogue of your inexpressible crimes ! Whichever way you turn your eyes, the wrecks of your former happiness will be displayed. When you reckon up the irreparable losses which your country has sustained, how will you curse that moment when the intoxication began ; how will you lament that infatuation which alienated you from your duty ! Blessed with so many natural advantages, you have scorned the gifts of God, and voluntarily embraced your ruin. You have optionally seceded from virtue, and allowed a plenary course to proscription and slaughter. Count the number of citizens you have murdered in cold blood. Enumerate the thousands of your countrymen who, by the chance of war, or by the hand of the executioner, have prematurely paid the debt of nature. Think, that your commerce is annihilated ; that your cities are destroyed ; that your manufactures are no more ; that the arts and sciences are fallen to decay ; and what imports you still more, that, as a people, you have for ever forfeited all title to esteem and respect. How have you sunk in the scale of nations !

Non, mihi si linguæ centum sint, oraque centum,  
 Ferrea vox, omnes scelerum comprehendere formas,  
 Omnia pœnarum percurrere nomina possim.

O Injustice ! these are thy trophies !

But notwithstanding the manifold and horrid crimes which have defiled France, independently of every other consideration, the common motives of humanity must induce us to desire a cessation of their present afflictions. This desirable object can only be effected by a total dereliction of their present maxims, and a return to an orderly government. What that government should be, I shall not pretend to determine; but, I think I may, without much risk, assert, that, if they remain united as one people, it cannot be republican. We, however, never wished to conquer opinions by the sword, and it is of little consequence to us, what polity they institute, provided they afford a security for the good faith of treaties and the observance of general laws.

Till a government is established which holds out these advantages, and is likely to endure, we can entertain no hopes of peace.

The prospect which we have before us is, however, much more flattering than it was some months ago. In the West Indies we have made several important and brilliant acquisitions, and, I think, we may fairly expect to receive, in a short time, a confirmation of our successes, and an account of the total expulsion of the French from those parts. To that quarter we must turn our eyes for an indemnification of the expenses of the war. Let us well consider, the value of those rich islands; of what importance they are to this country in her commercial capacity; and let us be  
careful,

careful, when the period of peace arrives, not to lose by treaty, what we have gained by arms. In the East Indies we have no longer an enemy to dread. Our successes at Corsica are nearly completed: and on the continent of Europe, we have assembled an army, commanded by skilful and experienced generals, and composed of soldiers, who, convinced of the necessity and justice of the cause for which they are contending, are fired with the noblest ardour, and are emulous to display their heroism. The internal parts of France are torn by civil commotions; their councils are distracted; and they begin to discover, that they have almost dried up those sources which, formerly, so plenteously supplied their lavish extravagance.

Thus, I conceive, we have no reason to despond. The burdens of the year have been but little felt, and, indeed, in a political point of view, unless the war is protracted beyond all bounds of probability, it will be the most advantageous and lucrative, in which we were ever engaged. What France has lost, we shall have acquired: we shall no longer have any rival to contend with, and the restoration of tranquillity will be shortly succeeded by a harvest of prosperity and wealth.

But even if, instead of succeeding, we had been foiled in every undertaking: if the posture of our affairs were ever so deplorable; still I should applaud the part which we are acting, and still peace and submission would be spurned at by Britons. This, as I have already observed, is a war of necessity.



sity. We did not enter into it from motives of ambition; we did not wish to extend our conquests, or to enslave surrounding nations; but we found ourselves in danger; our exertions were required; and we were obliged to contend *pro aris et focis*. The question was not, what we might gain by war; but what we must have lost by peace. It was requisite that we should guard our hearts against the insinuating poison of false principles; and, as we could no longer retain the friendship, that we should vigorously resist the enmity of France. We armed for the defence of our liberty and our laws. These were advantages worthy of a conflict; worthy of arousing a flame of generous resentment in the breast of our countrymen. What! could Britons be expected to stand like dastards, and tamely to look on, whilst the French were assaulting the palladium of their rights? Could we be supposed to remain inactive, whilst every thing which we have been accustomed to venerate was at stake? Were we, to avert a war, to resign our independence as a nation, and our individual happiness and security? Instead of testifying our readiness and our ability to defend ourselves, and to fulfil our most sacred duties, was it to be imagined, that we should, without a struggle, retreat from the field, covered with eternal infamy? We had, it is true, long prospered under peace; we had familiarized ourselves with its blessings; and we wished to preserve a continuance of them; but, when all our hopes proved fruitless, and all our measures



measures abortive; when provocation was unjustifiably heaped on provocation, our conduct would have been, in the highest degree, dishonourable and criminal, had we suffered them to pass with impunity.

From the present situation of affairs we certainly are warranted to augur success. Much, indeed, must depend on our being united, and on our firm belief that the interests of the government can never be separated from those of the people. Let us consider, that we are not only fighting for ourselves, but for future generations; and that it is our duty to consign, unimpaired to our children, what our ancestors have transmitted to us. Let us, therefore, exert every nerve, and oppose our enemies with an impenetrable phalanx of British courage and virtue. Let us recollect that we are contending for our existence and our liberties; and that whilst we insure the enjoyment of those important objects, whatever mortifications and discomfitures may afflict us in other respects, we gain our principal point. Let us also acknowledge the truth of this maxim, that it is worth running the risk of sacrificing a part, to preserve the whole.

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